



FROM YOUR CHAIR

Thank you for entrusting me with the role of Chair for the coming year. I promise to try and do my best. Many thanks also to Erica for all the hard work she has put in over the last few years. We are glad to see that she is stopping on the committee as Vice-Chair.

Please give serious consideration to joining the committee. This could initially just be as a watching brief before taking on one of the more prominent roles.

Our local constitution can be found on the Branch website.

Some of our groups could use extra members so please ask around the Group Leaders. You could also consider starting up a new group. Contact the Groups Co-Ordinator if you have an interesting idea. At least three new groups have started up this year.

If you have any ideas for organising a local event that can provide some publicity for our club, please contact Chris Crosby.

Keith Melford

Chair

YOUR COMMITTEE

Contactable via the Westbury u3a website: www.u3asites.org.uk/westbury

Chair Keith Melford	Membership Jen Faulks	Publicity/Newsletter Chris Crosby	Social Secretaries Maggie Skyrme, Joy Hancock, Caroline Murray, Julie Vince
Vice Chair Erica Watson	Treasurer Steve Crosby	Speakers Secretary Pauline Medhurst	Member John Osborne
Secretary Faith Dyson	Groups Coordinator Maggie Skyrme	Member Eileen Taylor	

WEBSITE - PLEASE CHECK REGULARLY FOR UPDATES, TRIPS, ETC

Please see the website for more information on each group, and to contact the Web Master with items you would like to add. Thank you.

www.u3asites.org.uk/westbury Just click on this link to be taken straight there!

GROUPS

Archaeology & History

- Richard Woodroffe
- Various Fridays monthly

The group began its 2023-24 programme of events with a talk by Professor Russell Lavelle, who was historical adviser to TV series of 'The Last Kingdom', the fictional but representative story of the conflict between the Saxons and Vikings in the late 9th, early 10th centuries. Russell talked to us about King Cnut who won the throne from Edmund Ironside in 1016 and united the kingdom of England as well as ruling large parts of Scandinavia.

In July, the group was guided by archaeologist Alan Soldat to Wansdyke near Pewsey. The Wansdyke has eastern and western dykes, probably created for defensive purposes in late Romano-British through to mid-Saxon periods. We took in burial mounds such as Adam's Grave and Knap hill, Alton Barnes White Horse, and Milk Hill, the highest point in Wiltshire.

Art - Painting for Pleasure

- Joyce Field
- 1st & 3rd Tuesdays monthly 9.30-12.00 Bratton Church Institute

We have no formal tuition; we paint or draw our own choice of subject in any medium. We have a coffee mid-morning. New members welcome!

Art Appreciation

- Joyce Field, Barbara Osborne
- 3rd Wednesday monthly 2.00 at either Barbara's home or exhibition venues.

During the summer we discussed Elizabeth Frink's sculpture, Paula Rego's painting and Cornelia Parker's large scale installations. We visited Victoria Art Gallery in Bath and Salisbury Cathedral to see 'Art and Liberty', artists' response to the Magna Carta. Our future programme includes visits to Caffe Fassett and Surrealism in Britain exhibitions at the Victoria Gallery and Gwen John's work at the Holbourne.

Bird Watching

- John Osborne
- 3rd Thursday monthly, usually all day

In April fourteen of us visited the Somerset Levels and found a wide range of wetland and migrant birds. At Ham Wall, Garganey and Glossy Ibis stole the show while, in the afternoon on Shapwick Heath, a Bittern in flight and Little Gulls were seen. A visit to Franchises Wood on the edge of the New Forest in May was enjoyed by five of us and Wood Warbler, Redstart and Cuckoo were found. Our June visit to Salisbury Plain in the heatwave proved better for flowers and butterflies although we did find Whinchats.

Book Club

- Erica Watson, Jean Hine
- 2nd Monday monthly 2.15-4.00 at John & Barbara's annexe. This venue has given us the space to welcome 2 new members recently.

Our latest book is Madly, Deeply The Alan Rickman Diaries with an introduction by Emma Thompson. Early thoughts from group members have been a little disappointing but not all of us have read it yet.

We had a very lively debate about "Should we Stay or Should we Go" by Lionel Shriver. Though the topic was an emotional one with reference to suicide the book was exceptionally well written and hilarious in parts with some very unusual ideas about what our future may hold. It was a book that members either loved or hated. Wiltshire Library continue to support us by supplying our books each month.

Book Club 2 Bookworms

- Judy Semple
- 4th Monday monthly 2.30 Library at Chantry Court, Chantry Lane, Westbury, BA13 3FE

Members who are residents find it convenient and those of us visiting enjoy the surroundings and easy parking.

We are reading a wide a range of books as possible, particularly enjoying some renowned non-British authors. Our discussions after we have read each book are very wide ranging and most enjoyable. If you are interested in joining please contact the group leader, Judy Semple, via the website.

Canasta

- Pat Walker
- 1st & 3rd Mondays monthly 2.00 in each members' homes

Our afternoons are very enjoyable and lively and though we play to win, we do not take it too seriously!

Computer Group

- Keith Melford
- 1st Thursday monthly 2.00 at The Weavers at Dilton Marsh **Please Note New Venue!**

The group continues each month to help with any computer or tablet problems that members have.

Creative Textiles

- Barbara Osborne
- 2nd Wednesday monthly 10.00-12.00 at Barbara's annexe

Meets on the second Wednesday of the month.

We recently visited Beggar's Knoll as part of the Open Garden scheme. Penny, an expert felter, helped us improve our wet felting skills and showed us around the garden. Thank you Penny. We've also been working on contributions for an exhibition at Midsomer Quilting in December.

Creative Yarn

- Jane Dyer
- 1st Wednesday monthly 10.00-12.00 Barbara & John Osborne's annexe

French Conversation

- Anna Messik
- 3rd Wednesday monthly 10.30

During the summer meetings are often held at The Three Horseshoes in Chapmanslade where the manager is French. In winter we revert to meeting in members' homes. The group consists of some who are fluent in French and others who are maintaining their school French. Full complement of members currently.

Garden Group

- Keith Melford
- 4th Thursday monthly 2.00 at various locations

Mah-Jong

- Jenny Ashen
- 1st & 3rd Saturdays monthly 2.00

Desperately needs new members!

Natural History

- John Osborne
- Now meets 2nd Thursday monthly

The group has had an active summer starting with a very enjoyable walk around Erlestoke Woods where, as well as the expected Bluebells, we came across a Pied Flycatcher on migration. In May we looked for butterflies on Battlesbury Hill and were fortunate to find a Duke of Burgundy. Priddy Mineries was a new venue for us in June and it proved to be an excellent habitat with Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary butterfly, Downy Emerald dragonfly and Crossbill seen. We regularly visit Bentley Wood for butterflies in July. This year the weather was cloudy and our sightings of Purple Emperor were distant treetop ones. Alners Gorse near Sturminster Newton is another superb site for butterflies. We found sixteen species including Brown Hairstreak in August. The summer was rounded off with a very successful Moth Trap event at Beggars Knoll attended by seventeen of us. Many thanks to Phillip who ran the moth trap and identified fifty odd species, and to Penny and Colin for hosting us.

Strollers

- Tuesdays 10.00 Please wear comfy walking footwear, and bring Next of Kin contact details

We meet at the following locations:

Week 1: Westbury Leigh Tesco

Week 2: High Street rotunda

Week 3: Penknapp near Providence Chapel

Week 4: Leighton Rec Sports Centre

Week 5: Meeting place chosen at end of Week 4

New walkers are very welcome and we can vary the walk to suit abilities. Contact Barbara Osborne via the website for more information.

Something Snappy Photography

- Eileen Taylor
- 4th Wednesday mornings at pre-planned locations

Table Tennis

- Wednesdays weekly 2.00-4.00

Members enjoy the one and a half hour sessions and the standard of play continues to improve.

Travel Buddies

Travel buddies enjoyed a visit to Weymouth on 5 September. The next trip will be to Portsmouth on 21 November enabling a visit to the Christmas Village at Gunwharf Quays or to the Historic Dock Yards. Ideas for any future trips welcome.

Monthly Meetings

- 2nd Tuesday monthly 2.00 Westbury URC Hall, Warminster Rd, Westbury BA13 3PJ
- Park at rear, off The Butts via Hospital Road. Please ignore the Car Park Closed sign.
- £2 payable on entry unless otherwise stated.
- DO PLEASE BRING ALONG A FRIEND WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN JOINING!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

Speakers	
October	Roger Browne: History of Jazz Piano
November	John Girvan: Street Toys and Games
December	Christmas Meal: No Meeting
January 2024	Peter Gill: Topic TBD
February	Wayne Spilsbury: The History of Art
March	Sally Smith: Lives of British Women Aviation Pioneers
April	Ian Caskie: SS Great Britain

Refreshments Rota for Monthly Meetings	
Please make every effort to help as otherwise it is unfair on others	
October	French Conversation
November	Garden Group
December	No Meeting
January 2024	Mah-Jong
February	Natural History
March	Strollers
April	Something Snappy